

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

November 1, 2007

The Honorable Alphonso Jackson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

Dear Secretary Jackson:

As you know, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) has long been a troubled agency - dating back as far as the late 1970's. Since 2002, HANO has been under the administration of your agency, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Despite HUD's best efforts, prior to Hurricane Katrina there were widespread concerns from constituents over the mismanagement of properties owned by the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO). Many of these dilapidated properties, and the lack of effective HANO community/supportive resources, contributed in large part to unsafe conditions in the surrounding community.

Following the storms, I have heard consistent complaints from the local community on HANO hampering recovery efforts in the area - including from the business, education, and healthcare sectors which are vital for recovery in New Orleans. One instance of HANO ineffectiveness impacting recovery is exemplified by the fact that HANO has not been forthcoming in providing data to relevant officials as to the number of children returning to HANO-owned properties. The lack of this particular data, although it may seem like an isolated incident, impacts where schools are located, when they are able to open, and the number of staff needed at each school. So now HANO is not only impacting conditions in the surrounding community but it is impacting recovery in the city as a whole. As HANO undertakes a massive effort to redevelop public housing in the city, I believe that both HANO's administration and its redevelopment plans merit close attention. In my capacity as Chairman of the Senate Disaster Recovery Subcommittee, as well as through my seat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, I fully intend to provide rigorous oversight on HANO on this and other matters.

As I write this letter to you, I am continuing to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to secure Senate passage of S. 1668, the "Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act." With these efforts in mind, I respectfully request that not later than November 14, 2007, that HUD provide in writing the following:

- A copy of the pre-Katrina Public Housing waiting list for HANO-owned or administered properties

- A copy of the pre-Katrina voucher waiting list for HANO-owned or administered properties
- Information on whether both the waiting list for Public Housing and the waiting list vouchers for HANO-owned or administered properties are currently closed, except for special admission to elderly housing. If so, information on what dates such lists were closed and a date certain on when HANO plans to reopen the lists
- Information on how many Disaster Voucher Program (DVP) vouchers have been issued by HANO and how many vouchers have been leased up to date
- Information on the 400 HANO units which are reported to be “key ready.” In particular, where these 400 units are located by public housing development, street address and unit number. Please separate this list into categories by bedroom size and any special features such as handicapped accessibility
- A breakdown of current HOPE VI funding available to HANO, how such funds are being utilized, and the two recent applications HANO submitted to HUD for \$40 million in additional HOPE VI funding
 - Information on why current HOPE VI funding has not been provided to developers at the big four developments for community/supportive services, as these funds are traditionally provided for such purposes
- The “Rehousing Plan” for each resident of HANO properties, broken down by specific HANO properties
 - If not included in the “Rehousing Plan,” information on the number of individual residents to be displaced, the type of counseling and advisory services HANO plans to provide, what housing resources are expected to be available to provide housing for displaced residents, and an estimate of the costs for counseling and advisory services and resident moving expenses, and the expected source for payment of these costs
- HANO’s “Reoccupancy and Admission Policy” for the big four public housing sites
- Project schedules for HANO projects scheduled for demolition
- Information outlining HANO allocations of funding for development of the four public housing sites

Page Three
November 1, 2007

- Information on relocation/moving cost assistance available to former pre-Katrina HANO residents, how long this assistance will be available to returning residents, and a copy of the relocation/moving assistance policy
- Information on HANO outreach efforts, if any, to notify residents displaced out of state that HANO will work with local Public Housing Authorities (PHA) to return interested residents home (including which Public Housing Authorities have been contacted by HANO and any agreements currently in place between HANO/PHA on this issue)
- Information on the budget and financing currently available for all HANO-owned properties, broken down by property
- Information outlining current HANO staffing figures versus HANO staffing figures as of August 28, 2007
- Information on HUD-assigned/detailed staff to HANO, and all current contractors employed by HANO

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Christopher Dodd
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Ray Nagin, Mayor, City of New Orleans
The Council of the City of New Orleans

MLL:brv